

**From:** Jean Mendoza [Ex. 6 Personal Privacy (PP)]  
**Sent:** 10/26/2022 7:21:53 AM  
**To:** Bitalac, Emily [Bitalac.Emily@epa.gov]  
**CC:** Chu, Rebecca [Chu.Rebecca@epa.gov]; Peak, Nicholas [Peak.Nicholas@epa.gov]; Brozusky, Sandra [Brozusky.Sandra@epa.gov]; [Ex. 6 Personal Privacy (PP)] calkins@westernlaw.org; Vidargas, Nick [Vidargas.Nick@epa.gov]; Vergeront, Julie [Vergeront.Julie@epa.gov]; Edmondson, Lucy [Edmondson.Lucy@epa.gov]; Duboiski, Christi [duboiski.christi@epa.gov]; Suzuki, Debra [Suzuki.Debra@epa.gov];

## Ex. 6 Personal Privacy (PP)

**Subject:** Re: EJ in Yakima

Hello Emily,

I see familiar names on this email list. Lots of history. Here is some background to bring newcomers up to date. In 2010 the EPA designated the Lower Yakima Valley an Environmental Justice Showcase Community. The EPA began a study of groundwater on a cluster of LYV dairies that is ongoing. We are grateful. Data from the dairy cluster says that cleanup of the aquifer will take many years.

In 2012 the WA State Dept. of Ecology (Ecology) set up a groundwater management area in the LYV. A committee of stakeholders met for the next seven years. The marginalization of the Latino population during those seven years is documented in an FOTC Minority Report, available at

<https://www.yakimacounty.us/2162/Minority-Report-GWMA-by-Jean-Mendoza>

In 2019 Ecology certified the LYV GWMA plan subject to three conditions. The only condition that has been met to date is the naming of a lead entity – the South Yakima Conservation District, a small agency with a staff of three.

On October 26, 2021, FOTC joined other environmental groups in a petition asking the EPA to re-visit the LYV under the Safe Drinking Water Act. Available at

<http://www.friendsoftoppenishcreek.org/cabinet/data/CFS%202021.10.26%20Petition%20for%20Emergency%20Action%20under%20Section%201431%20of%20the%20SDWA.pdf>

For years FOTC and friends have complained about unfair treatment of LYV residents by the Yakima Regional Clean Air Agency. We have twice asked Ecology to exercise their legally authorized oversight over the YRCAA and Ecology has refused. We have asked the Yakima County Commissioners to dissolve the YRCAA because the YRCAA does not regulate emissions from dairies as required by law, and because the YRCAA does not investigate citizen complaints related to dairies. See Arguments for Dissolution of the YRCAA at <http://www.friendsoftoppenishcreek.org/cabinet/data/FOTC%20Arguments%20for%20Dissolving%20the%20YRCAA.pdf>

In 2016 FOTC asked the EPA Office of Civil Rights to investigate discrimination at the YRCAA. In 2019 the Office of Civil Rights negotiated an agreement with the YRCAA to make materials available in Spanish and provide translation services.

In 2022 the YRCAA failed to include residents of the LYV in selection of a new Executive Director. See Air Regulations in Yakima County and the Open Public Meetings Act at

<http://www.friendsoftoppenishcreek.org/issues/air.html>

At their October meeting the YRCAA Board of Directors considered a proposal that will put women at the very bottom of the pay scale, even women responsible for accounting and complying with the laws. See Equal Pay for Equal Work? Not at the YRCAA. <http://www.friendsoftoppenishcreek.org/index.html>

Thanks

Jean

On Oct 25, 2022, at 2:40 PM, "Bitalac, Emily" <Bitalac.Emily@epa.gov> wrote:

Let's meet to discuss EJ concerns in Yakima. Hopefully this time works for everyone

**Proposed Draft Agenda:**

- Group Introductions
- Overview of concerns - FOTC
- Next steps - FOTC & EPA

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